

July 7, 2005

Mr. Joseph Solymossy
Site Vice-President
Nuclear Management Company, LLC
1717 Wakonade Drive East
Welch, MN 55089

SUBJECT: PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT, UNIT 1 - RESPONSE TO
NRC BULLETIN 2003-02, "LEAKAGE FROM REACTOR PRESSURE VESSEL
LOWER HEAD PENETRATIONS AND REACTOR COOLANT PRESSURE
BOUNDARY INTEGRITY (TAC NO. MC0558)

Dear Mr. Solymossy:

On August 21, 2003, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued NRC Bulletin 2003-02, "Leakage from Reactor Pressure Vessel Lower Head Penetrations and Reactor Coolant Pressure Boundary Integrity," to the industry. This bulletin informed addressees that current methods of inspecting the reactor pressure vessel (RPV) lower heads may need to be supplemented with bare-metal visual inspections in order to detect reactor coolant pressure boundary leakage. The bulletin also requested these addressees provide the NRC with information related to inspections that will be performed to verify the integrity of the RPV lower head penetrations.

The bulletin requested that addressees provide a description of the RPV lower head penetration inspection program that would be implemented at their respective plants during the next and subsequent refueling outages. This description was to include the extent of the inspection, the inspection methods to be used, the qualification standards for the inspection methods, the process used to resolve the source of findings of boric acid deposits or corrosion, the inspection documentation to be generated, and the basis for concluding that their plant satisfied applicable regulatory requirements related to the structural and leakage integrity of the RPV lower head penetrations.

By letter dated September 19, 2003, Nuclear Management Company (NMC) provided its response to this request. NMC committed to perform a 100-percent bare-metal visual inspection of the lower RPV dome up to and including each bottom-mounted instrumentation penetration to the RPV junction during the fall 2004 refueling outage at Prairie Island, Unit 1. In addition, NMC stated that this inspection would be completed on each unit during future refueling outages, subsequent to the fall 2003 refueling outage at Prairie Island, Unit 2. NMC indicated that this inspection schedule may be adjusted in the future should industry experience, changes to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Code, or a change in regulatory requirements justify a change to the inspection frequency or method. As such, NMC is requested to notify the NRC staff in writing of any changes to this commitment prior to implementation.

The bulletin also requested that addresses provide a summary of the RPV lower head penetration inspection that was performed at their plants, the extent of the inspection and the methods used, a description of the as-found condition of the lower head, any findings of relevant indications of through-wall leakage, and a summary of the disposition of any findings of boric acid deposits and any corrective actions taken as a result of indications found.

By letter dated January 24, 2005, NMC provided a summary of its inspection results at Prairie Island, Unit 1 for the fall 2004 refueling outage. NMC reported that it had performed a 360-degree bare-metal visual inspection of all 36 RPV lower head penetrations. NMC did not observe any evidence of RPV lower head penetration leakage.

Based on its review of NMC's responses to NRC Bulletin 2003-02, the NRC staff finds that NMC has met the reporting requirements of the bulletin for Prairie Island, Unit 1. Accordingly, TAC No. MC0558 is closed for Prairie Island, Unit 1.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Mahesh Chawla, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate III
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-282

cc: See next page

The bulletin also requested that addresses provide a summary of the RPV lower head penetration inspection that was performed at their plants, the extent of the inspection and the methods used, a description of the as-found condition of the lower head, any findings of relevant indications of through-wall leakage, and a summary of the disposition of any findings of boric acid deposits and any corrective actions taken as a result of indications found.

By letter dated January 24, 2005, NMC provided a summary of its inspection results at Prairie Island, Unit 1 for the fall 2004 refueling outage. NMC reported that it had performed a 360-degree bare-metal visual inspection of all 36 RPV lower head penetrations. NMC did not observe any evidence of RPV lower head penetration leakage.

Based on its review of NMC's responses to NRC Bulletin 2003-02, the NRC staff finds that NMC has met the reporting requirements of the bulletin for Prairie Island, Unit 1. Accordingly, TAC No. MC0558 is closed for Prairie Island, Unit 1.

Sincerely,
/RA/

Mahesh Chawla, Project Manager, Section 1
Project Directorate III
Division of Licensing Project Management
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No. 50-282

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Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2

cc:

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